

Claim Amendments:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Withdrawn) A method comprising the steps of:
receiving a minimum number of needed power bond pads;
determining a first number of power bond pads to be implemented, wherein the first number of power bond pads is greater than or equal to the minimum number; and
determining a second number of active buffer areas to be implemented for the power bond pads, wherein the second number is less than the first number.
2. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:
specifying a placement of a third number of immediately adjacent bond pads within a first distance along a periphery of a die, wherein the third number is less than the first number;
specifying a placement of a fourth number of immediately adjacent active buffer regions within the first distance along the periphery of the die, wherein the fourth number is less than the third number.
3. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of:
specifying a placement of a trace connecting two bond pads of the immediately adjacent bond pads, wherein the two bond pads are not immediately adjacent to each other.
4. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 3, wherein the step of specifying the placement of the trace includes the placement of the trace being at least partially between the two bond pads and an outer periphery of a die.
5. (Withdrawn) A method comprising the steps of:
connecting a first bond pad to a first portion of a package, wherein the first portion of the package is to supply a predetermined voltage;

connecting a second bond pad to a second portion of a package, wherein the second portion of the package is to supply the predetermined voltage; and wherein the first bond pad is connected to the second bond pad, and exactly one of the first bond pad and second bond pad is connected to an active buffer region, and a third bond pad is immediately adjacent to the second bond pad and to the first bond pad.

6. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 5, wherein the first portion of the package and the second portion of the package are electrically connected.

7. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein a first pitch between the first bond pad and the third bond pad is less than an average pitch between buffers in the active buffer region.

8. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein a first pitch between the first bond pad and the third bond pad is the same as a second pitch between the second bond pad and the third bond pad.

9. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 8, wherein the first pitch is a minimum allowable pitch.

10. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 8, wherein a fourth bond pad is immediately adjacent the second bond pad, and a third pitch between the second bond pad and the fourth bond pad is equal to the first pitch.

11. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10, wherein the first pitch is a minimum allowable pitch.

12. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 8, wherein a fourth bond pad is immediately adjacent to the second bond pad, and a third pitch between the second bond pad and the fourth bond pad is different than the first pitch.

13. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 12, wherein the first pitch is a minimum allowable pitch.

14. (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising:

semiconductor substrate having an input output (IO) ring, the IO ring having a bond pad portion and an active buffer portion;

the bond pad portion including:

a first bond pad;

a second set of bond pads having one or more bond pads;

a third bond pad, wherein the second set of bond pads is immediately adjacent to the first and third bond pads; and

a first conductive trace coupling the first bond pad to the third bond pad;

a second conductive trace coupling the first bond pad to a power buffer; and

a third conductive trace coupling one of the bond pads of the second set of bond pads to a signal buffer.

15. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the first bond pad and the third bond pad are to be coupled to a fixed voltage source.

16. (Original) The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the fixed voltage source is one of Vdd and Vss.

17. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, further comprising:

a package substrate having a power portion, wherein the power portion is to provide a fixed voltage;

a first bond wire connected to the first bond pad and the power portion; and

a second bond wire connected to the third bond pad and the power portion.

18. (Original) The apparatus of claim 17 further comprising exactly one of the first bond pad and the third bond pad being connected to the active buffer portion of the IO ring.

19. (Original) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the second set of bond pads includes one bond pad.

20. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the second set of bond pads includes more than one bond pad.

21. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the signal buffer is an input buffer.

22. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the signal buffer is an output buffer.

23. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the signal buffer is a bidirectional buffer.

24. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:
a semiconductor substrate including

a signal buffer;

a power buffer immediately adjacent to the signal buffer;

a first bond pad coupled to the power buffer;

a second bond pad coupled to ~~the first~~ the power buffer;

a third bond pad coupled to the signal buffer, wherein the third bond pad is immediately adjacent to the first and the second bond pad.

25. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 24, wherein the second bond pad is coupled to the first bond pad in a bond pad portion of the apparatus.